

### REMARKS

Claims 6-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by United States Patent No. 2,733,734 to Woodward. Reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of the claims is requested.

Independent claim 6 has been amended to change the “over moulding” to “injection moulding”. Applicant previously submitted that over moulding was a subset of injection moulding processes. However, the Examiner has suggested (although not specifically stated) in the response to Applicant’s arguments that over moulding should be interpreted in the context of claim 6 as **not limited** to injection moulding processes. Therefore, Applicant has amended claim 6 so that it is specifically stated that the process used in the method is an injection moulding process.

Injection moulding is a process by which molten plastic is injected at high pressure into a mould which has the desired shape of the product. This process is quite different from the processes described in the prior art citations where solid pre-formed items (i.e. **not** molten) are assembled and then heat treated (vulcanised).

In the application as originally filed, the forming processes for the first embodiment are described in paragraph [0038]: “...molten thermal plastic material is injected over the sleeve...” The second forming method is described in paragraph [0045], and it is stated that the sleeve is replaced by a soft rubber cuff which is over moulded into place (with all the other steps being similar to those described for the first forming method).

Applicant therefore submits that there is fair basis for the amendment of “over moulding” to “injection moulding”.

United States Patent No. 2,733,734 to Woodward does not discuss or disclose an injection moulding operation. Woodward discusses a process by which pre-formed parts are assembled and then heat-treated. Applicant submits this does not anticipate the amended claims, because an injection moulding step is now specifically claimed.

Applicant also request that the Examiner note that the definition of the word “cuff” as used in the application is that as generally understood by one of ordinary skill in the art. A cuff, as generally understood by one of ordinary skill in the art, is an item that is located at or close to the end of a sleeve (or similar), and does not run the length of the sleeve. It is quite clear from the description and figures of the present application that the cuff is intended to only cover a portion of the conduit at or close to one end. In contrast, in Col. 2, lines 10-13 of Woodward, it is specified that “... material a<sup>3</sup> ... is cut so that in its stretched condition, it is **equal** to the length of the fabric covered tube ...” [emphasis added].

Therefore, Applicant submits that Woodward does not anticipate, and cannot be modified to render obvious, claim 6. Reconsideration and allowance of claim 6 is requested.

Claims 7-9 are dependent upon claim 6. The dependency of the claims has been amended so that claim 7 is dependent only upon claim 6; claim 8 is dependent only upon claim 7; and claim 9 is dependent only upon claim 8. Because each of these claims are dependent upon claim 6 which Applicant submits is allowable, Applicant submits that claims 7-9 are allowable. Reconsideration and allowance is requested.

Claim 10, based on claim 3 of the application as originally filed, is newly-presented. New claim 10 specifies that “the inner part of [the] cuff extends from [the] connector”. Claim 10

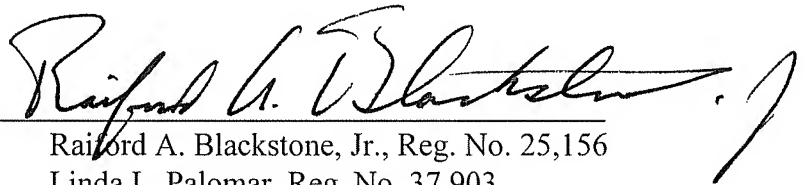
is dependent upon claim 6 which Applicant submits is allowable. Therefore, Applicant submits that claim 10 is allowable. Entry, consideration and allowance is requested.

A Request for Continued Examination is concurrently submitted herewith.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this Amendment, the Examiner is invited to contact one of the undersigned attorneys at (312) 704-1890.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: Oct. 19, 2007

By:   
Raiford A. Blackstone, Jr., Reg. No. 25,156  
Linda L. Palomar, Reg. No. 37,903

TREXLER, BUSHNELL, GIANGIORGI  
BLACKSTONE & MARR, LTD.  
105 W. Adams Street  
Suite 3600  
Chicago, Illinois 60603  
(312) 704-1890